



Skill Builder – Week 19 – 21

After The Well-Formed Outcome

What do you do after you have the well-formed outcome? It's a question I've been asked many times, because all we seem to do is practice getting the well-formed outcome.

Now, once you have an agreed upon outcome, and you have locked down that leverage point for change, what happens after is very often a walk in the park. As an example, when I did my coaching for PCMC level certification I spent 50 minutes getting the WFO and that mean I only had 10 minutes left to do the coaching. I went slightly over the 60 minute mark, but only with 3-4 minutes. And that was because we had found that one thing that would make the difference. It's been my experience more often than not that when you have the outcome, the coaching afterwards is a cinch.

Still, you need to know what to do afterwards. Are you going to run patterns? Is it still only about asking questions? What are you supposed to do?

Well, it all depends on what kind of conversation you are going to have. And that is determined in your Well-Formed Outcome.

Let's take a look at the different kinds of conversations first of all. I have taken the text from Coaching Conversations, written by L. Michael Hall and Michelle Duval, since this give a great overview and insight in the kinds of conversations.



The Seven Conversations of Meta-Coaching:

1) *Clarity*: Exploration for Clarity. A conversation to explore what the client wants and doesn't want to facilitate a clear understanding of the client's situation.

2) *Decision*: A probing for a decision or commitment to a goal. A conversation to weigh the pros and cons, understand the criteria, frames, beliefs behind a decision that facilitates a well thought-out decision, and to recognize the price that a client will pay for the decision.

3) *Planning*: Detailing out the actions that will implement a decision. A conversation to create a plan for how to reach an important goal.

4) *Experiencing*: Experiencing for resourcing and embodying. A conversation to develop the required resources and experiences of a client so he or she will be able to reach the desired goal.

5) *Changing*: Changing for transformation and renewing. A conversation designed to change a belief, decision, understanding, or a habit that interferes with a desired goal or that enables and facilitates it.

6) *Confrontation*: Confrontation for accountability. A conversation to confront whatever stands in the way like a client's blind spot or incongruency, something that the client seems unaware of or unwilling to deal with which



undermines his or her ability to carry out a desired plan.

7) *Mediation*: Working out a conflict between two or more parties. A conversation to address and resolve a conflict that interferes with the goal or relationship of several people.

1. The Clarity Conversation: Exploration for Clarity

Design: The design of *the clarity conversation* is simply to explore, to find out what is there, what drives the experiences, what causes it, what are the symptoms, to think aloud, to speak aloud, and to model what works or doesn't work.

Style: The style of this conversation is neutral, open, non-directive, patient, and supportive. To facilitate it, access a know-nothing state to create a strong sense of neutrality in yourself, a neutrality that will then convey safety to your client. In the clarification conversation you can suggest possibilities by offering a menu list of alternatives and/or throw out a whole series of ideas to see what might trigger something in your client. It is important to not solve things too soon, to not be too directive, to give plenty of space and time, and to be very patient and supportive.

Distinctions: Among the distinctions to pay attention to when facilitating a clarity conversation is how does the person “understands” or “knows” something.

- What is your client's learning strategy?



- What representation system is their preferred and strongest?
- How well does that system work?
- What is his or her criteria for clarity and what is his or her convincer program?
- Does your client have an all-or-nothing style in understanding?
- Does he or she prefer to know why, what, or how?

Enablers: One of the requirements for this kind of conversation is that the client needs to be able to embrace uncertainty and ambiguity and to be comfortable with a state of not-knowing at least for a while. Another is your ability to be present without an agenda— just listening, seeking to understand, and detecting patterns in the client’s responses.

Inhibitors: Among the inhibiting factors for a clarity conversation is the lack of permission to explore, the need to be perfect, and to know for sure (perfectionism). If the person has a belief such as, “If I know— then I have to do” this will prevent him to just think about it without reactively jumping too soon. That would imply too much of an active response meta-program. Another inhibiting factor would be the need for closure.

Patterns: The patterns that you will want to use as a coach include the Meta-Model questions, the Meta-Questions, and



the pattern for getting ego out of the way.

Signs: The signs for when to engage in this kind of conversation includes when a client does not know what to do, doesn't have enough information for knowing, has a need to know everything, etc.

States: The states to induce your client into as you facilitate this conversation include acceptance, openness, and explorative. So ask such questions as:

- How clear are you about this? (The problem, solution, situation)
- How much clearer do you want to be?
- What cues you that you have enough clarity to start to achieve your goal? The clarity conversation is to create understanding. This will differ for different clients. It depends on the factors and variables for a given client —the elements in play that the client requires to experience what counts for “understanding.” To understand, clients need to discover the rules, guidelines, and principles within an area governing that system. *Tools and Patterns:* An understanding strategy will have an order, structure, and form. What is the code of understanding? To understand you can use a diagram, a flow chart, mind-map, or a checklist. Enabling a client to have a clear understanding depends on the client having a good and solid strategy for understanding. What is his or her learning style,



convincer, and degree of clarity? What do you need to learn? How do you best learn? The Matrix Model to explore, strategy analysis; an interview model; the meta-questions; The Self-Actualization Quadrants for diagnosis.

2) A Decision Conversation: Probing for a Decision or Commitment

Design: The design of the commitment conversation is to help a person make a decision for a commitment. Involved in this will be the exploration of the pros and cons, the advantages and disadvantages of a decision in order to help your client make an informed and intelligent decision. It will involve identifying the person's criteria, values, standards, and references for understanding the decision.

Style: The style of this conversation will be analytical, personal, intense, directive, and even provocative at times. The reason is that you will be confronting the person with a choice— What do you want? Will you do this? Along the way to commitment, you will be facilitating the client to clarify his or her values, criteria, and standards. And you may have to directly challenge the person to face the choices before him or her and sometimes to make a hard choice. This conversation will alternate between reflective and active.

Distinctions: The distinctions that characterize this conversation have to do with decisions and commitment.

- Does your client make decisions? Is he or she decisive as a person?



- What is the decision strategy?
- How does the person decide?
- What is the person's criteria for decision, his or her speed in making conclusions?
- What meta-programs govern the person's decision making processes?
- Is she active or reflective?
- What is his convincer style?
- Is she a risk taker or not?

Inhibitors: The inhibiting factors to this conversation include a state of uncertainty, the lack of an absolute guarantee, the "what ifs," the lack of information, the fear of making a mistake. *Signs:* The signs that let you know when to engage in this kind of a decision conversation include questions by the client about decisions, "But what if X happens?" Or if the client continues to vacillate back and forth in indecisiveness in a state of incongruency. Another sign will be an over-optimistic attitude so the client has no sense that the decision comes at a price.

States: The states that you will be in, and that you will be accessing in the client, are the states of being analytical, of being aware of values and criteria, of readiness to say no to



the obstacles and interferences and yes to the new choice.

Among the questions that you might want to use in facilitating a decision conversation are:

- Is this decision a well-thought out decision that you are totally proud of?
- How committed are you to this decision?
- How clear are you about the price you will pay for this decision?

The Decision Conversation is a conversation about a decision: What to decide, in what areas (career, home, health, relationships, etc.), the criteria of that decision, the pros and cons, what actions to take, what choices to affirm and which to set aside, etc. What criteria, beliefs, and meanings inform and govern the decision, a cost analysis of the advantages and the disadvantages. *Tools and Patterns:* Among the patterns and factors for this conversation are risk management skills, dealing with perfectionism, and handling the critical nature of the decision. Tools you can use for this include the Meta-Program of Decision (Axes of Change); the matrix box of pros and cons.



3) The Planning Conversation: Detailing for Implementing

Design: The design of this conversation is to create and design an action plan for a change. It is to create a strategy for how to achieve the desired outcome or the transformation that's been decided on. This will also involve designing rules of the new inner game.

Style: The style of this conversation is pragmatic and practical; it is hands-on regarding the details and the sequence of what has to occur to actualize the change. As a Coach, engage in a spirit of pragmatism and practicality, take the Actualizer role and even mind-map with the person if that's appropriate.

Distinctions: A key distinction and competency that you will need as a Coach is that of meta-detailing and that will require the procedure meta-program and to operate from the modal operator of necessity. What is necessary as requirements that deal with the constraints of the goal?

Inhibitors: Inhibiting factors that will prevent or interfere with this conversation include a fear of the loss of options, the fear of losing control, and/or various negative meanings a client may have about practicality, details, procedures, etc. Signs that this is the conversation to engage in will be such statements from the client as "I need to," or "What shall I do?" Or "How can I make this happen?"



States: The states you'll need to access and operate from as a Coach include meta-detailing, planning, and creativity. The questions you will want to ask your client in the Planning Conversation include:

- What's your plan to make this dream real?
 - How many steps are required in your plan?
 - Is your plan sufficient to get started in actualizing your goal?
 - What else do you need to put into your plan?
 - How much clarity is needed? Are you clear enough to start?
- Tools and Patterns:* The Planning Conversation is a conversation about strategy—how to implement a decision for a specific outcome. The nature of the plan can range from simple to complex. The time can be short or long. In planning, there is the matter of how much detail is needed and how much at different stages. What is the form of the plan for the decision: decision-tree, checklist, blueprint /map; mind-map. Plans come in layers: number of meta-levels, beliefs, identity, permissions. Tools for this conversation: Strategy analysis; Matrix, Performance Axes.



4) The Experience Conversation: Experiencing for Developing Resources and Embodying

Design: The design of the Experience Conversation is to facilitate an experience that enables change, or unleashing, to build capacity, to role play, to translate from mind to body; to build up a new Matrix about a specific subject, to close the Knowing-Doing gap, to induce and/or amplify a state.

Style: The style of this conversation is much more emotional— personal, intimate, and intense. It is to guide, direct into an experience, to hold the crucible space for the experience.

Distinctions: The distinction in this conversation is that the client's emotions indicate what “experiencing” means to the client. His or her emotions embody the meanings driving and creating the emotions. With resources, a client then has sufficient confidence to begin to implement.

Inhibitors: Inhibiting factors will be the lack of permission to accept emotions, negative meanings about “control” and about “emotions.” Lack of trust and confidentiality can also inhibit the conversation.

Signs: The signs that this is the conversation you need to have will be statements like, “I don’t feel anything.” “Is this real?” Or “I know that!” Where there is a knowing-doing gap—the experience conversation is required.

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States: The states you'll need for this one include the "Go for it" state, an action state of *just do it*, an experimental and experimenting state, self-efficacy, confidence. So begin by asking:

- What do you need to experience in order to be free to be yourself?
- What do you need to give yourself fully to your goal?
- What resources do you want or need in order to actualize your outcome?
- What resources do you need to be confident enough in yourself and/or the process? *Tools and Patterns:* The Experience Conversation is about resources—experiences that create various resources: the emotional states, access to states, anchors of states; meta-state beliefs, decisions, identities. Role play: practice, try out, experiment, trial runs, scenarios, case studies, debriefs, discussions, dialogues, groups, interviews, modeling. Expand meta-programs — unleash new potentials. Tools also include State and Meta-State Accessing; Meta - Programs, Self-Actualization Quadrants, Matrix Embedded Pyramid.



5) The Change Conversation: Changing for Transformation

Design: The design of the Change Conversation is to alter, add to, or eliminate an experience or belief. It may be to walk or “dance” through the Axes of Change as you facilitate a client to change a belief, identity, or frame.

Style: The style of this conversation is directive, flexible, and focused. To prepare a person for change by accessing and developing the client’s motivation and decision; or to execute change by facilitating the creation and integration of the change. It could be to challenge a change that a client has already started to implement.

Distinctions: There are several distinctions that characterize a Change Conversation. One is the kinds of change—whether the change is a remedial change (in the area of therapy) or a generative change (in the area of self-actualization). There are levels of change that lead to different coaching levels: performance coaching for expanding and developing new behaviors, developmental coaching for enabling the person to evolve and grow, and transformative coaching for changing paradigms, direction, and vision.

Inhibitors: The factors that inhibit the Change Conversation include the fear of the unknown, fear of risk, fear of what you’ll find, fear of your identity, etc. Other inhibiting factors include limiting beliefs about change, such as “change is hard, long, and painful.” Over-devotion to one’s comfort or



security can inhibit this also.

Signs: Signs about when to use this conversation include questions from the client about wanting to change, statements about knowing precisely what to change, how to change, questions about whether change will last, what others will think, etc. A sign would be a statement about knowing but not doing, “I know that, but...” Other indicators would be comments about needing to unlearn something.

States: The states that you will need include openness, willingness, and decision. Questions to ask:

- What beliefs need to change for this new development to occur?
 - What decisions, habits, memories, identity, etc. do you need to change?
 - What do you need to break through to be free to pursue your outcome?
- The conversations in this book for the Change Conversation include the Axis

Tools and Patterns: For the Change Conversation, target the object that the client wants to change: meanings, beliefs, decisions, habits, lifestyle, emotions, relational patterns. Especially use The Axes of Change Model and the four mechanisms of generative change: motivation, decision, creation, integration. The Crucible Model is for unlearning, for creating the safety to change, and holding the space to challenge a client to change. Other tools include the Meta-States Model, the Meta-Questions, Dancing with Dragons



pattern, assertive speaking skills, defusing skills, etc.

6) The Confrontation Conversation: Confrontation for Accountability

Design: The design of the Confrontation Conversation is to bring up an unpleasant subject, hold person accountable, deal with lack of performance or poor performance or hurtful (unacceptable) behavior, identify a blind spot, and/or to work through a conflict and resolve it.

Style: The style of this conversation is confrontational, it is to hold a fierce conversation with a bull-dog persistence so that you are not sidetracked. As a coach, you will need to be diplomatic and charming in your confrontations, directive, personal (in rapport), and supportive.

Distinctions: The distinctions in this conversation include creating context for dealing with truth, identifying a client's blind-spots, giving feedback to errors and mistakes even when it is not wanted or desired. It is human nature that a person may be his own worst enemy. The other person doesn't want it, is not motivated, doesn't see value of it and feels threatened by it.

Inhibitors: What are the inhibiting factors to the confrontation conversation? Fear is the big one— fear of confrontation, fear of conflict, fear of experiencing negative emotions in oneself or in another. Other inhibiting factors include the lack of rapport, ability to be diplomatic even in conflict contexts, self-esteem connected to behavior and performance.



State: The states to be in and induce for this conversation include safety and trust, rapport, firmness, persistence in holding an outcome frame, and the flexibility to move between gentleness and strength. Questions to ask: • What do you need to confront in yourself? A habit, a blind spot, an emotion, a frame, a belief?

- How much have you confronted it so far?
- **How do you keep avoiding this confrontation?**
- What needs to happen to give you a mirror that will confront you?

Tools and Patterns: The Confrontation Conversation confronts blindspots (meta-program drivers, strengths, taboos), incongruencies (conflicting parts, sequential incongruity). Patterns: limiting patterns that undermine, sabotage. Beliefs, thinking patterns (cognitive distortions), deceptions. Eliciting a meta-awareness about behavior, response, safety for the conversation, confront with truth and reality. Other tools: The Crucible Model, The Johari Windows, Benchmarking Model.

7) The Mediation Conversation: Mediation for Conflict Resolution

Design: The design of the Mediation Conversation is to bring up an unpleasant subject between two (or more) parties who are in conflict. The design is to resolve a conflict or difference that's preventing two or more persons or a group



from effectively relating, cooperating, working together, succeeding in a project, etc. And by its very nature, the Mediation Conversation often involves Confrontation Conversations as well— confronting the issues between the parties in conflict.

Style: Confrontational; holding a fierce conversation that gets to the heart of the things that create the difference and conflict. Diplomatic in facilitating a win/win arrangement between the parties. Defusing the persons as necessary.

Distinctions: In this Conversation, the coach creates a context so that the parties can deal with the ideas, frames, beliefs, wants, needs, etc. that create the differences between them. The need is to get all of the concerns, issues, frames out in the open and on the table, need to get beyond the secrecy, positioning, manipulation. In any conflict between people the conflict is a difference between intentions that each party brings as well as their positions. Conflicts also occur at many different levels.

Inhibitors: The inhibiting factors include the fear of confrontation, fear of conflict, fear of negative emotions, not knowing how to facilitate the mediation, lack of rapport, lack of an agreement frame to search out a win/win agreement, disbelief about the possibility of a mutually satisfying solution. An inhibiting factor may be the belief that it is not possible to be diplomatic even in conflict contexts. And when a person's self-esteem is connected to their behavior and performance, this inhibits openness.



States: The states needed here include rapport, safety, trust, win/win purpose and design. Questions to ask:

- What do both of you need in order for us to talk through the conflict and identify the issues to be resolved?
 - What “rules of engagement” do we need to set so that we can manage the conversation and see if we can find a mutual win/win arrangement?
 - Where is your stress level at this moment?
 - When do we need to call a time-out for your stress levels?
 - **What would be the cost to each of you if you don’t find a solution to this conflict?**
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As you go down the Well-Formed Outcome pattern, you will identify which kind of coaching conversation you are going to have. Once you’ve agreed on the outcome, you can start the conversation. You’ll know what steps and stages to go through, as you’ve already established that. (Let’s say it’s a change conversation, and you get to the WFO question of steps and stages. Your client may not know how to make the change. That’s when you can either train (explain how change works) or give a menu-list so that you can help them identify this.) You’ll already know what steps and stages to go through.

The skill builder focuses on getting an overview of the different kinds of conversations and what patterns you can use. What you’ve read here in this document is not complete. We’re going to have a discussion on what other patterns can be added to the different kinds of conversations.



Skill Builder

- Make an overview of the different coaching conversations, and identify which patterns or models might be applicable for each of the conversations. (As an example: The Intentionality Pattern might be relevant in the Decision Making conversation, if there isn't enough motivation yet).
- Self Reflection: Do you have a preference for one of the conversations? What kind of conversations do you not like? What are your thoughts and feelings about the conversations you like and what you don't like? How do your meta-programs play a role in your preference?